GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1670
ANSWERED ON:03.08.2005
METERING OF PULSE RATE OF CELLULAR PHONES
Barad Shri Jashubhai Dhanabhai

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has prescribed rules/norms or evolved any system for metering of pulse rate of cellular phone calls of various private cellular companies operating throughout the country;

(b) if so, the names of cellular companies whose pulse rate has been checked so far or proposed to be checked by the Government;

(c) whether the Government has received any complaint from cellular subscribers regarding payment of enhanced amount of monthly cellular phone bills on account of tempering with the pulse rate; and

(d) if so, the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a) to (d): As per Telecommunications Tariff Order, 1999 of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) as amended from time to time, the tariff of cellular mobile services (except roaming charges) has been declared as `Forbearance`. The Cellular Mobile Service Providers are free to fix their tariffs/metering pulses for cellular phone calls. TRAI had received a number of billing related complaints. To investigate the reasons for the large number of billing complaints, TRAI appointed an International Consultant in the month of November, 2004. Billing system of M/s Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd., M/s Bharti Televenture Ltd., M/s Reliance Infocomm Ltd., M/s Tata Teleservices Ltd., M/s Idea Cellular Ltd., M/s Hutchison Essar Mobile Services Ltd., M/s Spice Communications Ltd., M/s Aircel Cellular Ltd. and M/s BPL Mobile Services Ltd. were checked. During this audit the Consultant did not find any tempering of pulse rate by any of the operators.

As a follow up to this audit, TRAI in consultation with the Consultant has developed a `Code of Practice for Billing Accuracy in India` and released a consultation paper on the subject.